FLORIZEL to PERDITA:

WITH

PERDITA's ANSWER.

1601/547.

BRITISH MUSEUM 30 JUL 70

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POETICAL EPISTLE

FROM

FLORIZEL TO PERDITA:

WITH

PERDITA's ANSWER.

AND

A PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE upon the EDUCATION of PRINCES.

My Brother Frederick abroad may roam,
While British Beauty keeps my heart at Home.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for J. STOCKDALE, No. 181, Piccadilly.

M.DCC.LXXXI.

[PRICE, HALF A CROWN.]

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Hoegel to Perdita

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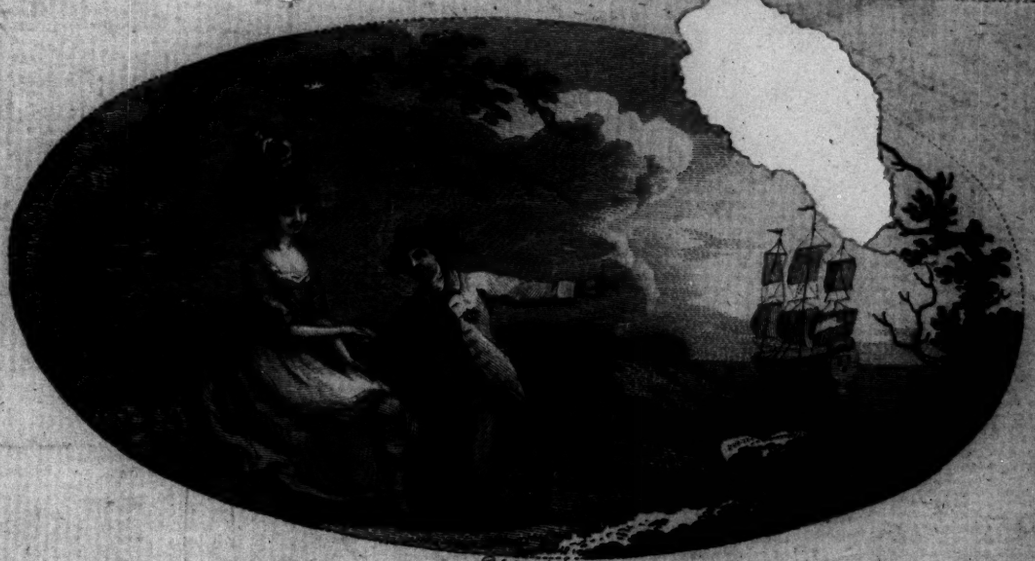
GREY BDS

A PRELIM[illegible]COURSE upon the ED[illegible]ATION of PRINCES.



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DEDICATION.

TO

HIMSELF.

BEING AS GOOD A JUDGE OF THE SUBJECT,

AS ANY OTHER MAN IN THE KINGDOM,

THIS PUBLICATION IS DEDICATED,

WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT AND REGARD,

BY THE

EDITOR.

D E D I C A T I O N

T O

H I M S E L F.

BEING AS GOOD A JUDGE OF THIS SUBJECT,

AS ANY OTHER MAN IN THE KINGDOM,

THIS DEDICATION IS DEDICATED,

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E D I T O R.

DISCOURSE

UPON THE EDUCATION OF PRINCES.

THE amiable diſpoſition of the moſt flatter'd Female Perſonage in the kingdom was never more conſpicuous than in her condeſcending attention to the impaſſioned requeſts of her amorous offspring. The education of Princes is of the greateſt conſequence to the State and muſt afford a happy preſage of eminence in life, when they are uſhered into it fraught with inſtructions not only for men of Theory but alſo for men of Practice. Religion and Morality are good ſounding names and each ſhould undoubtedly have its Profeſſor. But Manners and Faſhion require as much to be ſtudied; which makes Lord Malden and Mrs. Robinſon to be as neceſſary Tutors as Dr. Markham and Mr. Grant. The miſchiefs which have been experienced by this unhappy Country during the reign of the beſt of Princes are all to be attributed

to his Majeſty's want of knowledge of the world. He is the moſt pious, the moſt virtuous, moſt domeſtic Sovereign that ever reigned; but perhaps it had been better for his Subjects had he been as early acquainted with Maſquerades and Brothels as his Brothers and his Sons. His royal Conſort is generally allowed to have more underſtanding and we are well aſſured that ſhe not only winks at the intrigues of her eldeſt hope but has actually condeſcended to ſmile very graciouſly upon the object of his pleaſures, the fair Lady who is the Heroine of the Poetical Lines here given to the Public and which in the cloſet of the fair it is preſumed may be ſuffer'd to grace the ſame ſhelf with Ovid's Epiſtles. That thoſe celebrated Epiſtles are fictitious has never yet been matter of complaint. It imports not whether they are genuine. The incidents alluded to ſhould be true and ſo they are both in Florizel's Epiſtle and Perdita's Anſwer.

Mrs. Robinſon, characteriſed by Perdita, is a Lady of beautiful perſon and accompliſhed manners. Briſtol is the place of her nativity, a circumſtance alone ſufficient to

reſcue that city from the ſarcaſm of abounding with ugly women. Her parentage is not obſcure and her education has been ſplendid. She has not only an elegance of perſon but an uncommon elegance of mind. The cultivation of her literary talents was ſuperintended by the celebrated Miſs More. In Italy, the land from which originate all accompliſhments and where ſhe has relations who live in affluence and honor, ſhe received the finiſhed ton. Her only blemiſh is to have been married too early, but then her parents were in fault and not herſelf. They fondly thought that a humble match was better than an illuſtrious proſtitution. Their eyes have ſince been opened to the contrary; and Perdita's own mother looks with rapture upon her honorable advancement to the arms of a Prince; while the amiable daughter, unintoxicated with the luxury of a Court, reflects that ſhe has a parent and divides not a Prince's bounty with objects unworthy of her company. We ſee no ſharpers, fidlers, ſingers nor even other courtezans in her train. If it were poſſible ſhe would even ſhake off the mediator of her promotion. Nor ſhall we for this call her guilty of ingratitude to

Lord Pandar. Services performed for hire are completely done away by pay. The procurer has had his reward; and if infamy attends it, the cauſe is not ſo much in the act as in the motives for performing that act. To adminiſter to the pleaſures of a riſing Prince, to direct his youthful paſſions to a proper object, to ſave him from the arms of ſtrumpets of low character and to introduce him to a fair lady who inſtructs at the ſame time ſhe amuſes, theſe are honorable offices and of which neither Lord Pandar, nor any other young Lord, need be aſhamed. To lay a plan thereafter to diſturb his Prince's felicity, to raiſe ſuſpicions in a mind which never before ſuſpected, to plot the interpoſition of another Fair one for farther gain, this is wickedneſs and this truly a diſgrace. We have the happineſs however to aſſure the Public that the plan has not ſucceeded, for Perdita is as much in Florizel's favor as ever. Completely happy we ſhould be, if we could add that Lord Pandar was deprived of his honorable office for his infamous attempt againſt his Prince's virtuous inomorata.

Whether Florizel has already ſuffered in his amours, and if he has, whether ſuch harm has happened from his connexion with Perdita or with ſome other favorite, or whether the apprehended miſchief was only imaginary, has not been diſcovered; but if it were known, the editor is fully convinced the Public have a right to know it; becauſe no Truth ſhould be hid; they have a right to know every thing, more particularly the moſt ſecret actions of a Prince who is their future King. The ſatisfaction which this Public muſt receive in knowing that the Heir apparent of the Crown is of ſo promiſing a genius, ſo enterpriſing a ſpirit, ſo fond of the fair ſex, ſo well educated, ſo happily entered into the world, will alone be ſufficient pleaſure and compenſation to the editor for the taſk of introducing the following Epiſtles to their notice.

But before the editor takes leave of an indulgent Public, he wiſhes again and again to congratulate them upon the happy proſpect of a reverſe of fortune in a ſucceeding reign, whenever it ſhall pleaſe the Lord of all to take our preſent Sovereign Lord into his infinite mercy. There is

not a more miſtaken character in the kingdom than that which ought to be the beſt known. Every flippant ſcoffer has it in his mouth that our moſt amiable Sovereign is a perfect innocent; that he has tried all parties, wiſhes to employ the beſt, and however a malignant multitude may accuſe his head they can ſay nothing againſt his heart. The licence of talk and the impudence of the Preſs in ſpreading ſuch ſcandal deſerve the earlieſt and moſt cogent reprehenſion. For the contrary of all theſe bold aſſertions is the truth. The King's education under Lord Bute was quite different from that of his own royal offspring. No intrigues, no hunting, no mixture of convivial company. All gave way to ſtudy, to theory and to philoſophy. A long head was preferred to a pure heart, deep ſchemes to a facility of conviction; ceremony to cordiality and ſanctimoniouſneſs to virtue. Even if nature forced the royal pupil to intrigue, hypocriſy ſtill drew a veil over the adventure, and none other than a Quaker could be an admitted favorite at Leiceſter houſe. But never was the effect of inſtruction more fully diſplayed than in the general impoſition under which all men lie reſpecting the real

character of the Sovereign. So far from being the leaſt informed of the nation he is the moſt ſo. His memory is extenſive beyond example, unleſs it were that of Xerxes who knew all the common ſoldiers of his army. The tittle-tattle of every private family in the kingdom is at the tongue's end at St. James's. No art, no ſcience unverſed in, unleſs it were that of governing; and the inſtance of one deficiency is not to preclude the merit of a variety of other qualifications. Neither is that ignorance chargeable except in ſuch diſtant concerns as thoſe of the colonies; for the ſcience of domeſtic government is perfectly conned at home. Reſiſtance here is all in vain; and abſolute power is within the Sovereign's reach without a cloak whenever he pleaſes to exert it. The ſame under a diſguiſe is already exerted every day before our eyes.

The happy indifference of all ranks of people to the real misfortunes of the kingdom and the general miſconception of the royal abilities is a long ſtudied effect. But high as the obligations are, which we owe to this amazing

humiliation of ſo great a genius, who would rather take up with the character of an idiot than a tyrant, much greater is our debt for the cultivated education of the royal offspring and particularly the happy inſtitution of the two eldeſt Princes in the world. Had the heir apparent, inſtead of the acquaintances which he has been induced to make with faſhionable young men and handſome young women, been confined to the ſociety of men of letters arts or ſciences, as his father was, like him poſterity might have ſeen another King eſtabliſhing academies, collecting curioſities or fabricating nick-nackeries, while colonies (if any are to be left) were loſing and iſlands diſmembering from the Britiſh empire. Some vain theoriſts might rather have wiſhed that the firſt and laſt idea of his education had been that of a Patriot King. Romantic nonſenſe. A monſter, a chimæra in politics, what never did and never will exiſt. Such a character would produce ſo complete a revolution in government as would overturn the whole ſyſtem of human affairs. Luxury would diminiſh with the loſs of corruption, and with the loſs of luxury would periſh half the arts and

manufactures of the country. Idleneſs unſupported by taxes upon others muſt be turned into induſtry. No reward for ſuperior talents, no promotion for men of faſhion. Red coats would diſappear at home, becauſe a ſtanding army would be no longer neceſſary. Even black coats would be much diminiſhed; for beſides the retrenchment of the idle dignitaries of the church, with a reform of the law the lawyers would all be ruined. Such would be ſome of the bleſſed miſchiefs of a Patriot King, of which fortunately there is very little danger, even if there ſtill exiſted ſuch an inconſiderate character as that celebrated beauty, who told the king ſhe had ſeen all fights but a coronation, ſo ſhe had nothing more than that to long for.

Men of different prejudices may argue differently on this ſubject. Mr. Charles Fox may poſſibly lament to ſee a being of ſuch a ſtamp as Lord Pandar ſo cloſely attached to the Prince of Wales in his moſt private parties and predict at leaſt ſome happineſs to the country, that he does not poſſeſs a public employ in his highneſs's late

eſtabliſhment. Mr. Fox may thank the ambitious ſpirit of a certain royal Dutcheſs for Pandar's reputation. But little is the advantage of ſeparating him from the public ſuite, while ſtill he remains a confidential companion in private and eſpecially in all viſits to the fair. Here again the public have to admire the aſtoniſhing abilities of a great perſonage, who is not only ſole contriver but ſole miniſter, the ſource and ſpring of all we have ſeen and felt for theſe twenty years back; he is himſelf the man behind the curtain, the ſecret influence upon the cabinet, the Alpha and Omega of the laſt peace and the preſent war, whilſt he moſt heartily enjoys and laughs at the ſearching curioſity of his ſubjects to find out and puniſh that execrated character, which is ſometimes ſaid to be Lord Bute, at another time Lord North, then Lord Sandwich, and even of late that underling of office Charles Jenkinſon. With ſuch exalted talents not to counterplot the miſerable efforts of a weak though buſtling oppoſition, would argue infatuation to extreme. What then the buſy Dutcheſs aims to effect by the rational parties formed at Cumberland houſe is in Cork-ſtreet ſoon

undone; for the politics of a great Prince's miſtreſs are ſo far from being unworthy attention that it is very certain the true cauſe of all the royal ſmiles, which Perdita is well known to receive during her attendance upon the chace, are no compliments to the beauty of her perſon but merely meant as an approbation of her political ſyſtem, which is intirely miniſterial. The huſband of this ambitious and intriguing Dutcheſs, already famous for his epiſtolary correſpondence with the lady of another noble Peer, acts his part alſo in the minority's conſpiracy againſt Perdita; and though it is but an under part, it is quite conſonant to that naval hero's genius, for he recollects the ridiculous letters which he wrote while at ſea to the lady Groſvenor and learning that Florizel has actually written ninety ſeven letters to Perdita, one of which is as long as from London to the Land's end, with reaſon he apprehends they may be as well ſpelt as his own, which is exactly the caſe, for it cannot be expected that any great perſonage ſhould be able to ſpell common words; and for this as well as other reaſons the Duke has moved heaven and earth to recover theſe letters from the cuſtody

of Perdita, or to ſpeak plainer he has tempted her with variety of preſents and a greater variety of promiſes to deliver up the literary treaſure. Hitherto all to no purpoſe; for Perdita knows, while ſhe has theſe letters, ſhe is ſure of her Florizel, or is ſure to be able to expoſe him if he chuſes to deſert her. She therefore carefully hoards them up, and while ſhe does ſo the royal uncle, though he has ſucceeded in depriving Lord Pandar of his expected office, ſtill wants that hold upon his nephew which othewiſe would be complete, for probably the threat of publication would then be repeated from another quarter. At preſent the greateſt chance of the world arriving at any acquaintance with thoſe valuable and numerous epiſtles is the poſſibility of a total break between the two lovers, which (let what will be ſaid and whatever may have been either provocation or appearance) has not yet happened. It is however a certainty that many of theſe letters are not merely on the ſubject of love but upon politics, being, as appears from the contents, anſwers to Perdita's admonitions on that ſubject. Her principles in this line are purely orthodox; and notwith-

ſtanding the manifeſt biaſs which ſhe perceived in Florizel's mind to adopt the party of oppoſition, when he came to figure in public, yet under pain of his diſpleaſure ſhe continued ſteady to the miniſterial cauſe. From hence the royal regard and the ducal hatred which ſhe at the ſame period experiences. When the connexion is broke between Florizel and Perdita the oppoſition have the Prince entire. The faction will then indeed have a right to boaſt. They already know his indignant ſpirit at conduct which has abridged his great inheritance. But while he is diſſipated he is unſteady. Much leſs can they depend upon him, while Perdita attracts his youthful paſſions and with her enchanting diſcourſe influences his mind. To break the bands of ſo complete an infatuation no engine is left unworkt. Hence it comes, that Lady Craven, who in her own deportment adopts thoſe faſhionable manners countenanced by the times and by the court, yet to obtain indulgence to her Ciceſbeio adopts alſo the political ſentiments of her huſband, is known to throw out her daily ſhafts of ridicule, againſt the envied Perdita. Hence it is that Mr. Fox makes his nightly love to

Miſs Farren, not to win her for himſelf but to ſubſtitute her in the place of Mrs. Robinſon; and thoſe very characters ſhe filled the public may ſoon expect to ſee performed by Miſs Farren, if Mr. Fox's oratory ſucceeds. But hitherto Miſs Farren has abſolutely refuſed even to put on the garments which ſo much attracted the youthful Florizel, who ſeems to have a particular paſſion for ſeeing all his deſtined favorites firſt of all in men's apparel, of which there is no great wonder to be made, for the alteration of dreſs certainly gives the curious obſerver great advantage in parts otherwiſe too much eclipſed from ſight. While Perdita retains her political ſentiments and refuſes, as ſhe has hitherto conſtantly done, to beſtow a favor even in the way of her occupation upon a ſingle member of the minority, though offered to be purchaſed at the moſt ſplendid price, ſhe is ſure of one powerful friend at leaſt at court, and the world will continue to ſee a juſtification of the ſentiment that they have nothing to do with the affair, let the young folks act as they will, as long as the old folks are content and agreed. Mean time happy is that man of the majority who can attain

even at the honor of kiſſing Perdita's hand, if ſhe ſtill can keep her Florizel attached. Superlatively happy is he who can arrive at higher favors, nor perhaps are they quite unattainable by thoſe who have the true means and merit to procure them.

By ſome it has been doubted whether the ſame pains have been taken to improve the manners morals principles and intellects of his royal highneſs the Biſhop as of his brother the Prince. The inquiſitive public may be aſſured that exactly the ſame pains have been taken with the one as with the other. When the firſt dawnings of manhood appeared in his royal holineſs a conclave was held in Buckingham houſe nurſery, over which the moſt amiable perſonage in the kingdom preſided, and there it was abſolutely determined *nem. con.* and even entered upon the records of the ſtate horn-book, contrary to a remonſtrance from the maids of honor, that a *help meet* for ſuch a call was to be provided. Mrs. Smith was the favorite female approved of after a nice inſpection; to viſit whom

at ten miles diſtance acroſs the country, as far as Uxbridge is from Windſor, the youthful lover has flown over hedge and ditch in the midſt of a royal hunt, and when he has returned with all that fire and wildneſs ſo natively his own, the maſter of the chace, pretending an apprehenſion that he had broke his neck after the ſtag, upon aſking him where he had been ſo long abſent, has received for anſwer that he was at his elbow all the time; each party willingly diſſembling thus a mutual impoſition upon the other. Determined therefore that no dangerous innovations ſhall be admited in this country, no reforms adopted, for no one knows where reforms will end, the wiſe planner of all this ſyſtem of education has provided that no more hope ſhall be entertained of the ſecond than of the firſt. This kingdom, and the world in general is very well for thoſe who have it in their power and know how to enjoy it. Others may grumble but they have nothing elſe to do than to grumble. Princes are not of that unhappy mould. The Biſhop of Oſnaburgh is gone abroad upon a very different plan than to mend either himſelf or the world.

We wiſh his royal highneſs a happy ſight of his dominions. Let him obſerve men and manners as he goes on. He will find that the merit and demerit, nay that the very crime and virtue of things reſt in faſhion and opinion. What is good here is bad elſewhere. The ſubjects of the moſt deſpotic countries are happier than Engliſhmen are with all their pretended liberties. This is a leſſon worthy to be learnt by a britiſh Prince. It is a ſentiment frequently retailed at court, formed no doubt a royal inſtruction to the travelling biſhop and will be ſure to occupy as much of his attention as can be ſpared from convincing foreign ladies for what pupoſe ſo exalted a character has been educated and demonſtrating to all the courts abroad the omnipotence of the legiſlature of great Britain, who at the beck of the Sovereign have repealed the law of god from marriage to concubinage, and by denying matrimony to the younger branches of the royal family have ſtampt an honor upon intrigue beyond the preacher's power to remove.

The education of the female branch of the royal family has been no leſs unimpeachable. They are all beauty, all elegance. If matched abroad, they will probably cut as great and good a figure as their royal aunt the Queen of Denmark, famous for wearing leather breeches when ſhe went out a hunting and famous for her condeſcenſion in talking a trooper's language when ſhe talked to a perſon even above the rank of a trooper. If unmatched at home, there is no doubt from the modern character of our fair and frail nobility they will have examples enough (ſhould they chuſe to indulge) to keep them in countenance. A ſpecimen of the rapid improvements and great imitative powers of one of the younger princeſſes may be known from this anecdote. Lady Charlotte Finch, ſeeing one of her hopeful charges place herſelf in a poſture near the fire more becoming a different ſex, after having repeatedly deſired her highneſs to chuſe another attitude, had the pleaſure to hear her anſwer, "I'll be damn'd if I do." To be ſure the pleaſure had a mixture of ſurprize with it, which however was removed on hearing her highneſs add, "My brother Wil-

liam ſays ſo." As to the early education of Prince William it is not of ſo much importance. The navy is a ſufficient ſchool for a naval officer; or if it were not, it is of little matter; as with the probable deſtruction of the Britiſh navy Britain will probably ſtand in little want of officers of that deſcription. But it is rather over-kind in this naval genius to take an aſſiſtant part in the education of his ſiſters. As he has ſuch a talent, it might not be amiſs however if he would give a hint to his elder brother, that it would be much more princely (and ſucceſs would be a very eaſy taſk) if he would leave all vulgar amours to vulgar perſons and exert his mighty abilities with the ſex in ſeducing to his honorable arms the titled beauties of his father's court, who for ſuch advancement would turn their backs on Veſtris, for already they ſtand a tiptoe, married and unmarried, like Sultanas, waiting for the drop of his princely handkerchief.

FLORIZEL TO PERDITA.

O! fair deceiver, how I wiſh you true!
For all I love in woman's found in you.
Unknown to all your ſex, a perfect boy,
Fledg'd but unvers'd in manhood's greateſt joy,
You taught me what it was to be a Man
And baffled all my royal Father's plan.
His modeſt manners and parental care
Bade me ſuſpect th' allurements of the fair;
Taught me to think no happineſs in life
Until permitted by his will a wife.
Domeſtic comfort true I ſaw at home,
Nor could th' example more completely come.

But when I ſaw you walk the ſcenic ſtage,
His voice no more was dread nor counſel ſage.
Your gait your look with faſcinating ſkill
Led me a captive 'gainſt my ſenſe and will.
My mind rememb'red what before was told,
But wiſhes then were young and leſſons old.
In vain my Governor had caſt a ~~frown~~;
To win the Fair, I'd even ſpurn a crown.
No cares of empire ſhall my ſoul perplex
Unleſs I've liberty throughout the Sex.
My future ſubjects generouſly will give
At leaſt the liberty themſelves receive.
Not that I think their liberty is ſuch
As ſhould be leſs, I only aſk as much.
Forgive me, fair one, if in ſpeech I'm free,
For in my acts I ſtill muſt captive be;
And tho' my reaſon would my love abate,
I own I love, and deprecate your hate.
Loſt Perdita! your Florizel's too loſt,
For treachery his faithful love has croſt.

And yet I curſe the word that is applied,
Or if applied to you the word's denied.
My Perdita is true---and kind to moſt
Except that Prince whoſe heart ſhe knows is loſt.
She fix'd the bait, and having hook'd my heart
The ſportive teazer play'd the angler's art.
That wicked Pandar! practis'd in the ſchool
Of modern times where vice is taught by rule;
Why did he aſk me if I thought a lad,
And not a girl in boy's apparel clad,
Could look like you? on any youth impoſe
If ſhe ſuch part in maſquerade had choſe?
Harmleſs I read the part which Shakeſpeare drew,
Its hurtful quality I learnt from you.
He knew Narciſſus was no plan for me;
The maid was too apparent not to ſee.
He call'd the alter'd dreſs a harmleſs joke;
I felt the harm when Perdita had ſpoke.
But as through fear I then had felt too light
Eftſoons he rais'd Viola to my ſight.

The dear deceiver was no player there,
She ſeem'd the maid confeſt in ev'ry air.
I knew that art might beautify the face
And give to ugly features ſeeming grace.
True elegance of limbs is nature's aid;
A ſhape's by birthright while a face is made.
But moſt he bid me caſt my guiltleſs eye
To view the well-turn'd roundneſs of the thigh;
And when my raviſh'd ſight with that was bleſt,
He bid me ſtill admire and view the reſt.
I ſtill admir'd, but ſaw no more than this,
A ſomething elſe was wanting for my bliſs.
My mind was fill'd with ſenſes of delight,
Which never yet was ſatisfied with ſight.
Delight your Florizel had never known,
'Till you my Perdita unbrac'd your zone.
Raptures ſuperior I muſt ſtill declare,
Though often ſince repeated with the Fair.
Your practis'd ſkill convey'd ſome art to me;
None need long time in love a Tiro be.

Such ſweet aſſiſtance had I from your aid,
I more had loſt than gain'd were you a maid.
The practis'd Rake may fancy Virgins ſtill,
The bluſhing Boy admires the Matron's ſkill.
There is a rule of learning for each art,
And ſports beſides our ſtudies bear a part.
The Clown as well might Tennis play with eaſe,
As Boys untaught the modeſt Virgin pleaſe.
Your Scholar now's adept enough to dare
The firſt embraces of th' unpractis'd Fair.
But with uncooling paſſion ſtill I burn'd,
And to the arms of Perdita return'd.
The royal chace might pleaſe my father's mind,
While full-mouth'd dogs purſu'd the panting hind.
Not that athletic paſtime I deſpiſe,
But other charms attract my wand'ring eyes.
The hunted deer is Perdita---her flight,
Is all my pain, poſſeſſion my delight.
Though Virgil pictures his Eneas brave,
A ſtorm will drive him to the ſhelt'ring cave.

My brother Frederick abroad may roam,
While Britiſh beauty keeps my heart at home.
Of old tis ſaid th' Epiſcopalian lawn
On many a bold intrigue a veil has drawn.
But modern Biſhops have no need to wed,
To taſte the pleaſures of a nuptial bed.
The huſbands of one wife may love a ſcore
And wives to ſome be miſtreſſes to more.
No fair Godiva's now are modeſt known,
Not e'en in Coventry, much leſs in town.
If North diſplays her heaving boſom bare,
Aſk no more leave but kiſs the willing Fair.
When love no conſtant paſſion will allow,
In vain we ſeek it from the plighted vow.
The Prieſt and Altar are a ſtanding joke
And wedded names to wantonneſs a cloak.
My Perdita will this example prove;
The man whoſe name ſhe takes ſhe cannot love.
Why will you then thoſe privileges waſte,
On ſuch who by demanding loſe their taſte?

Cuckolds may have their brow with gold adorn'd,
But let him lie alone whoſe forehead's horn'd.
Your conſtancy to all but him and me
Is not enough---and Florizel is free.
Th' abandon'd wretch has other vile purſuits,
And mere contempt is all ſuch creatures ſuits.
That little harm, which wak'd me in a night
Of fancied raptures of ſome paſt delight,
I can forgive. I know that Cupid's camp
Has ills, as well as Mars, our joys to damp.
But to receive th' inoculated peſt
From vulgar cuckolds, who enjoy their reſt
By proſtitution of an injur'd dame,
Gives me regret, becauſe it gives me ſhame.
Has Florizel ſo weak a part to play
As can his paſſions and not yours allay?
Were all thoſe raptures which you felt a jeſt?
Or your delight ſtage-mimicry at beſt?
I too ſhall mimic, where I once was true,
And learn at leaſt one leſſon more from you.
That leſſon firſt I practiſe on yourſelf;
My heart is free, and nothing your's but pelf.

PERDITA TO FLORIZEL.

THINK not, my Prince, the dictates of this pen
Owe their faint force to aid of letter'd men!
My guileleſs heart knew what at firſt to ſay,
And grief alone has caus'd this ſhort delay.
Words ſhould ſupply this letter, if I durſt.
Let my poor heart before your preſence burſt.
Forbid that grace, what's left me, whilſt I bleed,
Than juſt to write what you ſcarce e'er will read?
But for thoſe letters which you wrote before,
My daily taſk's to read them o'er and o'er.
Are then thoſe things forgot you've ſaid ſo oft,
Which to recite no language were too ſoft?
Your own dear words your own ideas ſuit,
Unbiaſs'd nature's firſt and genuine fruit.
Thoſe ſweet memorials of your former joy
No bribes no threats ſhall urge me to deſtroy.

Your royal uncle may repent the part
He took, when love and nature rul'd his heart.
The publiſh'd letter but condemns to ſhame
The Prince, when treach'ry's quencht love's former flame.
Inconſtant Florizel! I never taught
That art your talents have ſo quickly caught.
Mine was a taſk of pleaſanter purſuit;
To find the young emotions room to ſhoot,
To give exiſtence to the pictur'd ſport
Which ſuits alike the cottage and the court,
To realiſe imagin'd ſcenes and teach
Leſſons more pleaſant than the ear can reach.
Not unprepar'd, I own, my ſcholar found
An eaſy taſk to tread love's myſtic round.
For nature prompts in ſpight of parents care
The Prince to leave an empire for the Fair.
In vain the watch is ſet, the guards patrole,
When love's hot paſſion fires the youthful ſoul.
What? though you came a novice to my arms
And talk'd myſteriouſly of hidden charms;

No art was wanting to increaſe the joy,
And courage ſoon inſpir'd the baſhful boy.
Enjoyment ſtampt the confidence of love,
And now you'll neither yield to Mars nor Jove.
The metamarphos'd tales which Ovid wrote,
And which, as ſchoolboys uſe, you'd learnt by rote;
Intrigues adventures of romantic times
And all the ſtories told in luſcious rhimes,
Whether by nurſes or by doctors taught,
Were leſſons that poſſeſt your ev'ry thought.
Nor were the Engliſh claſſics quite unread,
With Rocheſter, your fav'rite, at the head.
More modeſt eſſays, paraphras'd with eaſe,
Fail'd not by contraſt of the thought to pleaſe.
But what was the idea to the fact?
Theſe taught you what to think, and I to act.
Nor was my Prince of that ungen'rous frame,
To take inſtruction nor reward the dame.
One nightly taſk with me was paid with more
Than all your reverend teachers had before.

The ſpangled liv'ry glitters in my hall,
While gilded equipages wait my call.
Two gawdy blacks with flambeaux in their hands
Tell by their pomp what Perdita commands.
Yet all this affluence but gives me pain
If in the midſt I've fail'd your heart to gain.
Think not my pride is flatter'd in the chace
By royal huntſmen, who my preſence grace;
Or that I ſpurn the haunts of Drury-lane,
Becauſe my rivals on the ſtage remain.
True, I rejoice the mercenary crew
To quit, but all my pleaſure's ſtill in you.
If you regard me, though I ſhould be poor,
I'm rich enough above the reſt to ſoar.
Fred'rick may yield his paſſion to debate
And the decrees of female conclaves wait;
The Queen and Schwellenburg may council call
And put the naked queſtion to them all;
If Oſnaburgh ſhall be indulg'd with ſport
Which to enjoy you aſk no leave of court.

Our two mammas have courteouſly agreed,
If we're content the nation need not heed.
Your royal Father winks at all, no doubt,
And in the chace knows more than hounds are out.
He hears with joy his ſon outrides the field,
But ſees there's other game than foreſts yield.
If then ſuch honors to my lot have come,
What cuckold ſpouſe could make my houſe his home?
Baniſh the vile idea from your mind;
Not e'en an angel here would welcome find.
Leave not the object of your choice to fall
Promiſcuous ſacrifice to luſtful call!
The grave ſhould ſooner open to my arms
Than wretches taſte appropriated charms.
Whate'er by nature's kindneſs I poſſeſs
Has not been made by education leſs.
The dread abyſs of proſtituted ill
May weaker minds with apprehenſion fill.
But if your princely love is turn'd to hate,
'Tis but to follow Cleopatra's fate.

The poiſon'd bowl, the poniard's ſteel, or aſp
With more than mimic hands I dare to graſp.
Releas'd from wretchedneſs by welcome death
To fate with eagerneſs I'd yeild my breath.
But Pandar's cunning ſhall not triumph ſo;
I'll live that wretch to give a deadly blow.
Doubtleſs his art has caus'd me all this grief,
And his diſgrace will be my ſole relief.
When one ſucceeds another plan is laid,
For Pandar thrives by proſtitution's aid.
The only talent he can well exert
Is to betray our ſex and then deſert.
If any miſchief you have felt from love,
Can no embrace but mine diſaſt'rous prove?
O! rather think you have no other ill
Than to remove I have both pow'r and will!
Come then again to my extended arms,
And realiſe imagination's charms!
As you ſhall grant my wiſhes, or deny,
I live in rapture, or with rapture die.

THE END.